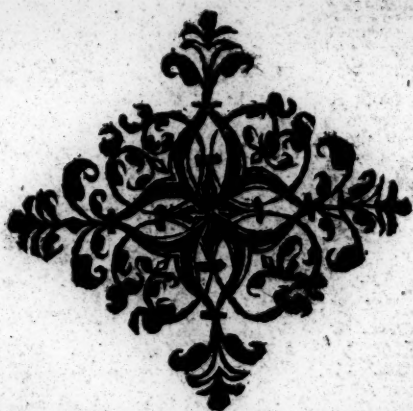
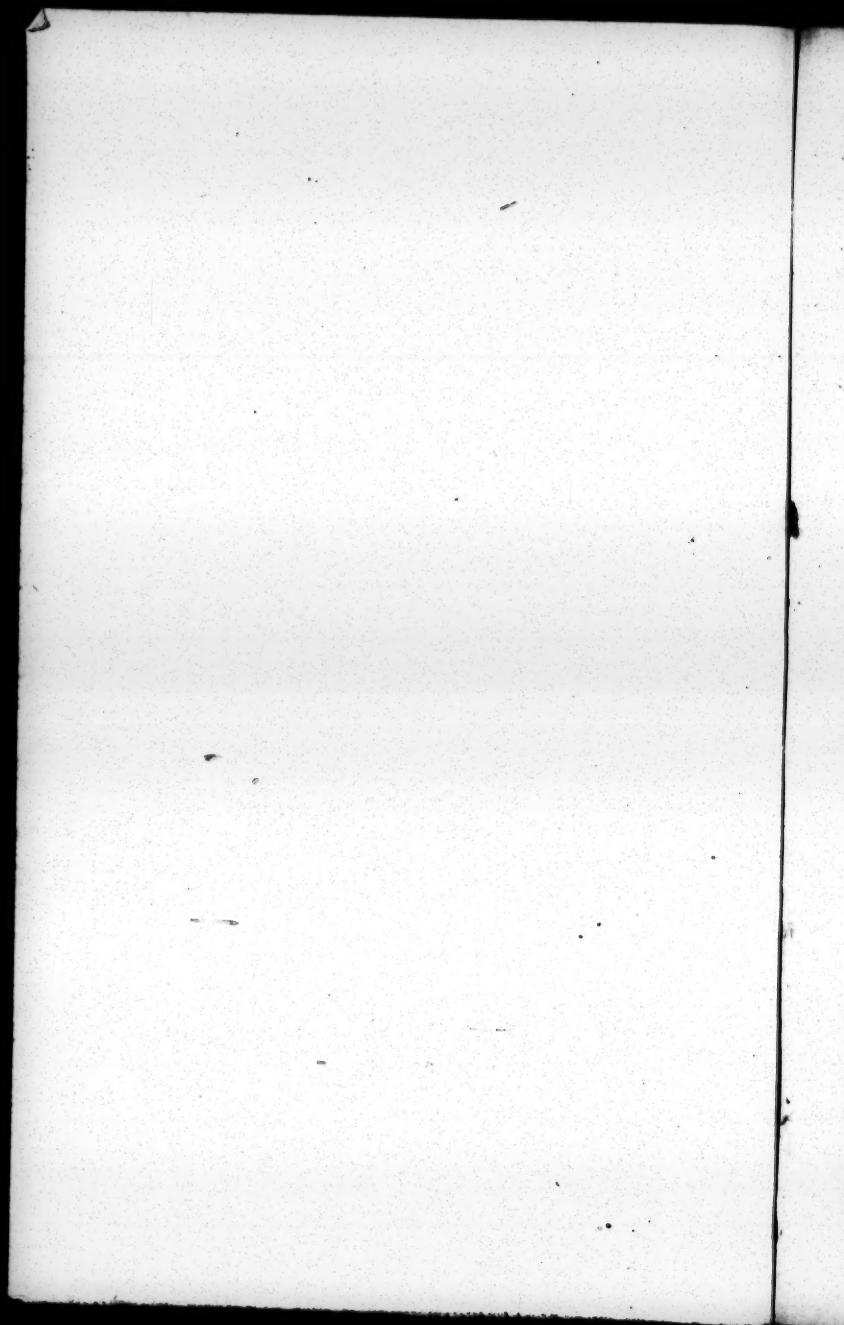


Questions propounded
for Resolution of unlearned
PROTESTANTS,
In matter of Religion, to the
Doctours of the Prelaticall
pretended Reformed Church
of England.



Printed at Paris, 1657.



Questions propounded
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In matter of Religion, to the Do-
ctours of the Prelaticall pre-
tended, reformed Church of
England.

1. *Quest.* **W**Hither every Chri-
stian is not obliged, to
chuse the safest way, all things consi-
dered, to Salvation?

2. *Quest.* Whither that way, wherein
both parties acknowledge, that un-
learned men may have possibility of
Salvation, I though one
of them say it be with
difficulty and danger, if
they look not well to the
foundation, be not pru-
dently to be judged more safe for the
unlearned,

*1 Bishop of Can-
terbury, in his
Relation of the
conference, &c.
p. 35. pag. 280.*

unlearned, then that which is esteem-
ed safe by one only party ; and that
incomparably less in number, but by
the other incomparably greater party,
which equalizes the less in all respects
requisite to gain credit and authority,
is constantly held to be utterly void
of all possibility of Salvation, even for
unlearned persons ?

3. *Quest.* Whither this be not the
present case betwixt Protestants and
those of the Roman Church, accord-
ing to the acknowledgement of the
latest and learnedst of Protestant Au-
thours ; they acknowledging the
2 B. of Cant. in 2 said possibility of Salva-
fore cited tion for unlearned persons
place. in the Romane ; and the
Romane Doctours denying all possi-
bility to unlearned Protestants, so long
as they remain willfully in the Prote-
stant Religion ?

4. *Quest.* Whither all unlearned
Protestants, who are sufficiently in-
formed of what is here said, are not
guilty

guilty of a damnable neglect of their Salvation, so long as they remain Protestants, and refuse to be of the Roman Church?

5. *Quest.* Whither a person, who is in quiet possession of any Goods, Titles, Rights, or Dignities, &c. retain not the right to all such Goods, and is wrongfully deprived of them, so long as he neither confesses that he hath no right to them, nor is condemned by the clear sentence of any lawfull and competent judge, of sufficient authority to define against him, but still maintaines his cause against his Adversary, and gives at least probable answers to all that he alledges against him, and pleads to be restored to his ancient possession taken from him by force and violence? And whither he, who thus violently took the possession from him, be not obliged in conscience to restore it to him again? and whither he proceeds not unjustly, so long as he retains it from him?

6. *Quest.*

6. *Quest.* Whither this hath not been, within the last hundred and fifty years, and still is, the proceeding of Protestants against the Romane Church, violently excluding her Bishops, Pastours, and people, from the quiet possession, of many hundred years continuance, of their Doctrine, Dignities, Titles, Governments, Benefices, Churches, Possessions, and still retayning them, and refusing to restore them; those of the Romane Church still claiming their right, and never having been condemned by any competent and lawfull judge, nor acknowledging themselves convinced to have obtained that possession wrongfully.

7. *Quest.* Whither the quiet possession of many ages, both of the Eastern and Western Churches, in their unanimous consent of Doctrine and practise, in most points of controversie betwixt them and Protestants, be not a sufficient proof to justify the said doctrine and practise; till it be convinced

vinced clearly, evidently and undeniably, (by reason or authority) or lawfully condemned of error? So that it belongs to Protestants, who are the Aggressours, to convince their adversaries of error, and not to those of the Roman, or Grecian Churches, to prove their Tenents by any other argument, then that of their quiet, ancient, and universall possession, though Catholicks be upon the affirmative, and Protestants upon the negative; as he who quietly possesses the name, title, armes and lands of such, or such a familie, hath sufficiently proved, that he has right to them, and that they are truly his, till he either confesse, that the contrary is sufficiently proved, or that it be lawfully determined against him.

8. *Quest.* Whither it is not a most insolent madness (as St. *Augustin.* terms it) or an insufferable height of pride, for any Christian whatsoever to call in question, much more to censure
and

and condemne as erroneous , that which all the visible Churches in the world taught and practised; and a manifest foolery, to follow any teachers, and give care and belief to them, who contradict the universall practise and doctrine of the whole Christian world?

9. *Quest.* Whither the first was not done by the first Authors of Protestant Religion; and the second done, and still continued by their followers? or if the first Authours of Protestant Religion received those points of their doctrine from any visible Church in the whole world which existed immediately before their relinquishing the Roman doctrine, let that Church be produced, and named.

10. *Quest.* Seeing Protestants affirme, that the Roman Church is infected with errors in Faith, which they pretend to have purged in their Reformation, I demand that it be evidenced, when any of these pretended errors begun

begun to be publicly taught & practi-
 sed out of some approved Authours of
 any age, who affirm, that the pub'lick
 profession of the said errors *begun*
in or about their time. For seeing they
 were publicly practised through all
 Christendom, if that publick practise
 had ever begun in any age since the A-
 postles, it must have been taken notice
 of: whereby their instances of con-
 sumption in the Lungs, of a beard
 growing white, &c. are shewed to be
 nothing to the purpose; because they
 are either wholly secret, or insensible,
 and no way publick and notorious, as
 these were. And seeing Faith by S.
Paul. Ephes. 4. v. 1. 2. is said to be *one*,
 and reckoned up with the unity of
 God and Christ, and so must be per-
 fectly, *one*, how Protestants, and those
 of the Roman Church can properly
 be said to have *one* Faith, when the
 the one believes, what the other dis-
 believes? And as opinions contra-
 dicting one another cannot be said to

be one opinion, how can Faiths contradicting one another be said to be one Faith? neither is it enough to say, that they are *one* in that wherein they agree, for so they will be *one* only in part, or partially, and not absolutely and entirely: and as the least difference destroys the perfect unitie of God & Christ, so will it do that of faith; and though my opinion agree with that of another in many things, but disagrees in many others from his, we can never be said absolutely (as it must be in faith) to be of the same, or one opinion.

Quest. 11. Whither it be not a great argument, to induce any rationall indifferent man, to judge that the Protestant Authours are put to great Straits, and to desperate acknowledgements, when being ashamed of the first refuge of their beginners, in flying for the defence of their Succession to an invisible Church, and no less of the second, in alleadging for
their

their predeceffours and continuance of the visibilitie of their Church, *Berengarius*, the Waldenses, Albigenses, Wicleffests, Hussites, and other publickly condemned hereticks, they confess, that they have *now* no other means to save their visible succession, but by acknowledging, that they succeed to the Church of *Rome*, and other Churches joyning with her against them in all the points of difference betwixt them, and her; and so are enforced to acknowledge her, and all those who are united to her, to be true Churches of Christ, and consequently to hold no fundamentall error at all; & consequent to this, to acknowledge, that their first Authours & Churches, both in *England* and other countries, wronged the Church of *Rome* and those others insufferably, first, in condemning them of Superstition, Idolatry, Antichristianisme, &c. which are fundamentall errors in Religion, and destructive of Salvation. Secondly

upon this pretext in destroying, burning, and alienating to secular uses so many thousands of their Churches, Monasteries, Towns, Citties, Castles, Villages. Thirdly in massacring and putting to cruell torments and death, so many Priests and Professours of the Roman religion. Fourthly in depriving their Bishops and Clergie-men of their respective Church-governments, dignities, Seas, Benefices and Churches, and setting up others, they yet living, in their places. Fifthly in making it no less then high Treason, (which is yet in force) either to be Priests, or to communicate with them in many spirituall Church offices and Sacraments. Sixthly in continuing to this day, in a violent detaining of their Churches, benefices, dignities, and spirituall functions, from all those of the Roman Profession, and holding them in their own hands; and all this, because they maintain certain pretended errors, which they now confess

sefs not to be fundamentall, nor destructive of Salvation; & consequently that those of the Roman Church have suffered, and still suffer all these intollerable injuries, for that which even these modern Authors acknowledge to be no more then a veniall or small sin: for if it were mortall, it would destroy Salvation, so long as one willfully continues in it; which they affirm, it does not.

Further by this acknowledgement, these modern Protestant Authours must confess, that their former writers, who were of a contrarie mind, in charging the Church of *Rome* and the rest with her, of superstition, and Idolatry, &c. and all those, who then joyned with them, and all their modern Churches and Protesters, both without and within *England*, who at this day hold it as a point of their faith, to accuse the Church of *Rome* in the same manner, erre damnably against Christian Truth, and conse-

quently are no true Churches of Christ. For it cannot be lesse then a damnable error to make it a point of their faith, and religion, to condemne any one, much more all the visible Churches of the West, nay and of the East too, and so of whole Christendom, for nine hundred years together, of grievous superstition, when upon better examination, the Doctours of the same Protestant Church are compelled by force of Truth to confess, that those Churches neither are, nor ever were guilty of any of those horrid errors, and at the most erre only venially and lightly; which hinder them not, either to be (1) a true Church of Christ, or to obtain Salvation, even while they most constantly and immoveably maintain them; and accurse all who willfully contradict them, or condemne them as erroneous.

(1) *Bish.*
Cont. p. 129.
num. 3.

And hence also it follows, that
 seeing those modern Protestant Au-
 thours

thours and their partie, communicate in prayer and Sacraments, with the Presbyterians and Calvinists, who accuse the Church of Rome of Idolatry, &c. (and so put it in fundamentall error,) and acknowledge themselves to make one Church with them, must be guilty of deadly schisme by that communion and acknowledgement; and consequently so long as they continue in that communion, are incapable of Salvation.

Quest. 12. Whether it be not a great argument of securitie to those who either are of the Roman Church, or convert themselves to it, that her very adversaries after so many condemnations of her to hold most grievous, and damnable errors, dare not now accuse her to hold any error destructive of salvation; so that the belief of her doctrine in every point, their obedience to all her commands, the exercise of all her practises, their praying to Saints, reverencing of holy Images,

adoring of Christ as really and naturally present in the Sacrament, &c. consist with salvation. And though

*B. of Cant.
above cited
181.*

some say, though they destroy not salvation, yet they are dangerous points, and practises, weakning the foundation, and endangering the destruction of it in continuance of time; yet who sees not, that it is more secure to hold a religion, which makes the foundation only weak, by their adversaries confession, then to hold theirs, which the contrarie party most constantly affirms to destroy quite, & raise the foundation of religion, and to make salvation, not only hard & in danger, but utterly impossible, till it be deserted.

Quest. 13. Whither it be a likely thing, that the *chiefest* of the pretended errors in the Roman religion, contain any danger of loosing salvation, in maintaining them, seeing for this thousand years, by the common confession

fession of Protestants themselves, they
 have been universally believed and
 practised, as matters belonging to
 Christian faith and dutie, both by the
 Latin and Greek Church; and so the
 belief and practise of them was the
 common way, wherein Christians
 were saved; which if it were dange-
 rous, what other *safe way* was there,
 wherein Christians might be saved; &
 yet certainlie there was alwayes a safe
 way to Heaven: And what lik-lyhood
 is there, that the safe way should be
 wholly unknown and unpractised for
 so many hundred years together, and
 the common known way, according
 to the full belief & settled perswasion
 of all the visible Churches of Chri-
 stendom, should be dangerous and un-
 safe? or what reason can be given, that
 the Professours of the doctrine of the
 Roman Church, should be in an un-
 safe, or dangerous way, before Prote-
 stants begun seeing they had none in
 those times, to shew them, that they
 were in danger.

Quest.

Quest. 14. Whither it have any shew of probabilitie, that the said pretended errors, though they raise not the foundation of Christian faith (as the late Protestants confels) yet they may in time endanger the raising and destruction of it, as they argue, seeing that after the universall belief of them, for a thousand years together, the foundation remains yet undestroyed and entire? For

B. of Cant.

p. 283.

if a thousand years continuance of them hath stood with the integritie of the foundation, what appearance is there, that they will ever cause, or induce the destruction of it?

Quest. 15. Further concerning this Protestant distinction of errors in faith, fundamentall and not fundamentall, I demand first, what they understand by fundamentall errors? for if they mean any nicetic in speculation, or Theologicall discourse, it belongs not to the knowledge of the un-

unlearned: either the refore they must understand by a fundamentall error, such an error in faith, as destroyes salvation howsoever that comes to pass, or they say nothing to the present purpose. This therefore supposed to be their meaning, I demand secondly a Catalogue, & precise number of the fundamentall errors in faith, that is, how many, & which are those errors in faith, which destroy salvation? for what helps it a Christian to know, that there are such destructive and damnable errors, unless he know whether he hold any such error himself, or no? And how can he ever be certain of that, so long as he is ignorant, which are fundamentall errors, which not? If this Catalogue be refused, I demand at least some evident means, or marks, to distinguish errors in faith, destructive of salvation or damnable, from others consistent with salvation, or veniall: which is neither to deny any of the Articles
con-

contained in the three Creeds (as some Protestants have thought;) for one of them puts the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father *and the son*, the deniall of which they neither do, nor can hold to be a fundamentall error, unless they affirm the Grecian Church to erre fundamentally, & so denie it to be a true Church of Christ; which were quite against the said Protestants, seeing they maintain the contrarie. Nor is the Creed of the Apostles alone a sufficient rule to determine fully, which are fundamentall points, which not; both because there are some things in it, which (by reason of the lightness of the matter they contain,) come not by far so near the radicall and primarie misteries of Christian faith, as do many points controverted betwixt Protestants and those of the Roman Church, and therefore cannot with any shew of truth be termed fundamentall by Protestants, such as are the

the circumstances of time & persons; as that our Saviour suffered *under Pontius Pilate*, and *no other judge*, that hee rose *the Third*, and *no other day*, &c. And because some points, necessarie to the subsistence of Christian faith according to Protestants, are not expressly defined in that Creed; as that the Holy Scriptures are the divine word of God, which is the precise number of the Books of Canonickall Scripture; whither, there is any written word of God, or no; or any Sacraments, &c. so that a Christian finds not all fundamentall points of faith set down expressly in the Apostles Creed. Neither is the Scripture a sufficient rule to know which are, which are not fundamentall points. For there are a thousand, nay a million of Truths expressed in Scriptures, which touch not immediately the foundation of faith, as Protestants term it; and no small number of points, according to them, fundamentall, which are not



expressed in Scripture, as the number of Canonickall Books, the entire incorrupt puritie of the originall, in any copie, or copies, which is come to the hands of Protestants, &c. which in their principles are such points of faith, that true faith, and consequently salvation, cannot be obtained without them. For if sole Scripture, (as they affirme) be the rule of faith, and all that is in Scripture is to be believed, and nothing to be believed, but what is in Scripture, or evidently deduced from it, seeing faith is necessarie to salvation, the determinate belief of all that is true Scripture, from which only (they say) the true points of faith are drawn, must be necessarie to salvation, and so a fundamentall point of faith.

Thirdly, I demand, how any Christian can affirm, that the denyall of any point of faith whatsoever, being sufficiently propounded as such, is consistent with salvation, seeing all such
de-

denyalls, or disbeliefs, include this damnable malice, of attributing falsity to that which is revealed by God himself, as all points of faith are, how small so ever the matter be, which is revealed in them; which appears evidently in this example.

I suppose that this sentence of Scripture, *Tertia die resurget*, he shall rise again *the third day*, is sufficiently propounded to any one, as a point and article of Christian faith, as well according to the substance *resurget*, that our Saviour should rise again, (which Protestants grant to be a fundamentall point) as the circumstance of time, *Tertia die, the third day*. Now suppose that some Christian, to whom this whole sentence of Scripture is sufficiently propounded, should firmly believe the substance, or mysterie of the resurrection, because he esteems it to be a fundamentall point, but should disbelieve the precise circumstance of time, that it was *only upon the third*



third, and *no other day*, I demand seeing both the one and the other is propounded equally, as expressly contained in that sentence of Holy Scripture, whither he that disbelieves that the resurrection happened upon the third day, and dyes in that belief, can be saved?

Quest. 16. I demand farther, that seeing S. Paul, *Hebr. 11.v.1.* says, that faith is *ὑπόστασις*, the substance, or ground (as the Protestant English Bible of *Anno 1648.* hath it) of things hoped for, and is reckoned up by the same Apostle *Hebr. 6.v.1.2.* amongst those things, which are called by him *basis*, the foundation, one of them being *Faith to God*. And the Apostle *Ephes. 2.v.20.* sayes we are built *ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ*, upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, which now, according to Protestants, can be nothing else save the writings of the Prophets and Apostles in Holy Scripture, I demand, whither to say that
some

some points of *Faith* are not fundamentall, or belonging to the foundation, be not as contrarie to common sense, as to say, that some stone in the foundation of a building belongs not to the foundation, or is not fundamentall?

Quest. ¹⁷33. Further I demand, that seeing *S. Paul* affirms in the fore cited place, *Hebrews* the 6. vers. 2. that *laying on of hands* amongst many other points, is the foundation; how Protestants can deny, that (seeing the *laying on of hands* is disbelieved and rejected by them in the Sacrament of confirmation, and by some in the Administration of Holy Orders, as a Popish superstition) that such Protestants differ fundamentally, or in the foundation from those of the Roman Church? or, if the *laying on of hands* belong to the foundation, as *S. Paul* here affirmed, why anointing with oyle, mentioned by *S. James*, should not also be a fundamentall point? or

why, *laying on of hands* (being only, as Protestants esteem it, a ceremonie not Sacramentall) should be here termed *the foundation* and the substance of the Eucharist, which all hold to be Sacramentall, and more then a meere ceremonie, should not be fundamentall? or lastly, what reason there is to say, that *laying on of hands* hath a nearer connexion to the radicall and prime mysteries of our faith, then many other points controverted betwixt Protestants and those of the Roman Church?

It is yet further demanded, seeing Protestants affirme, that the whole visible Catholick Church may erre in the definition of points of faith not fundamentall; and seeing they affirm, that the points in difference betwixt us, are not fundamentall, and so not necessarie to salvation; & lastly. Seeing they affirm also, that the Scriptures may be obscure in points not necessarie to salvation, by what means can they

they ever think to convince the Roman Church of error in these points of difference betwixt them and her?

Quest. 19. Seeing also, that every point of faith is a divine truth proceeding from the Revelation of God, and to be believed (as I suppose for the present with the common consent of Protestants) with *an infallible assent of faith*, if the universall visible Church may erre, and the Scriptures may be obscure as is generally affirmed by our adversaries in points of faith not fundamentall, how shall such points as are in controversie betwixt us, and are accounted by Protestants not fundamentall, or not necessarie to salvation, be discerned to be points of faith? or how agreed this modern Protestant doctrine of no difference betwixt us in points necessary to salvation, with that of their beginners, and more ancient Predecessours, who taught that the Scriptures were clear only in all points necessary to salva-

tion, and upon that pretext, both affirmed that our doctrin's against them, were clearly convinced of falshood by the authority of sole Scripture, and allowed all lay people promiscuously to read them, as being clear to them in all the points controverted betwixt us? for this manifestly supposes, that they were held by those beginners to be points of faith necessary to salvation, or fundamentals: or what means is there to believe them as points of faith; seeing they can never be believed infallibly upon the Churches authoritie by reason of her pretended fallibilitie in them; nor expressly for the authoritie of Scripture by reason of its obscurity in the delivery of them, according to the principles of Protestants?

Quest. 20. I demand further, if the whole visible Church may erre, in the definition of any point of faith whatsoever, that error must either proceed from ignorance & want of light,
or

or from malice and want of vertue or goodnes: not the second, for then the whole visible Church of Christ should not be *Sancta, Holy*, as it is believed to be in our Creed, and described in the Scriptures, but should become a Harlot & abominable willfull deceiver of the world, and a seducer of Nations in teaching, contrarie to the known truth: not the first, for if she could erre out of ignorance, to what purpose do Protestants appeal to her determination in a lawfull generall Councell, in any of the points in difference betwixt them and those of the Roman Church, seeing she may through ignorance erre in the determination of them, as being not fundamentall, according to them.

Neither can it be said, that, notwithstanding the whole visible Churches fallibility in points not fundamentall, nay though it should actually erre, and that error should be evidently discovered, yet even those

who had thus evidently discovered the said errors , were to conform themselves to those erroneous definitions of a generall Councell. For if this conformity be understood of an internall conformity in judgement, it is wholly impossible, seeing that we are to judge the same thing to be true, and not true, at the same time, and to judge against an evident knowledge: and if it be understood of an externall conformity and profession only, it were manifestly impious and high hipocrisie, in resisting the known truth , and professing to believe that as a divine Truth revealed by Almighty God, which they evidently know to be a most false error in faith. Secondly , if one were to subscribe & externally to conform himself to the definitions of lawfull generall Councells, which one perswades himself, he evidently knows to be erroneous, till another Councell be assembled to correct them , why did not Protestants
afford

afford this externall conformity to the definitions of the Generall Councell of Florence, of Lateran, and to the second Councell of Nice, (to omit others) till some other lawfull generall Councell came to correct their pretended errors, they having no other reason to reject the authority of the said Councells, then that they define many things against the Protestant doctrine. Thirdly, seeing it was never yet seen, nor can be ever made manifest, that any lawfull generall Councell revoked any definition in matter of faith, of any former lawfull generall Councell, what hope is there, that they shall now begin to do, what was never done before them? Fourthly, if it were supposed, that any such revocatorie definition should issue from them, that party, whose doctrine should be condemned by such revocations, would accuse that Councell of error, as much as the contrary party accused the former Councell of

error in defining against them ; and so the controversie would remain as indetermined as it was before: neither would it be possible ever to determine it fully by a generall Councell; for the party condemned would still expect another Councell to revoke that definition; which seems to him evidently erroneous; and so there would be no end of new determinations and revocations *in infinitum*.

Yet further , seeing lawfull generall Councells do not only oblige, even under pain of Anathema, or being accursed and excommunicated, all Christians to believe and profess the doctrine which they teach them, not only to be true and free from error, but to be divine Truth, revealed by God himself; if they should erre in any such definition , they must make God the Authour of error and untruth, which quite destroyes the veracity of God , and consequently overthrowes the main and primary foundation

tion of Christian faith, and therefore must necessarily be held to include a fundamentall error: so impossible and implicative a thing it is, for them to erre in matter of faith, and not to erre fundamentally. For either that erring Councell must define some positive error, or that which God never revealed, to be revealed from God; or that some true revelation of God is an error; both which contain no less malice then this, *to make God a liar.*

Quest. 21. Seeing S. Paul, *Ephes. 4. v. 14.* affirms, that our Saviour had appointed Pastours and Teachers, till the day of judgement, as a means to preserve Christian people from being carried about with every wind of doctrine, these words *every wind of doctrine* cannot be understood disjunctively; for then if those Pastours preserved them from being seduced in one only point of Christian doctrine, it would not be true, that they
pre-

preserved them from being carried about with *every* wind of doctrine; but they must be understood conjunctively, that is, that they preserve them from being carried away *with any* wind of doctrine whatsoever, which should chance to be buzzed into their ears by false Teachers. Now seeing such winds of erroneous doctrine are raised as well in points, which Protestants account not fundamentall as in fundamentalls, the meaning of the Apostle must be, that by means of those Pastours Christians be preserved from following any error in faith, whither it be fundamentall or not fundamentall; and consequently that they can assuredly direct them, to eschew all errors in faith, which they could not do, if they themselves were subject to teach them any error, or seduce them by any wind of doctrine whatsoever.

Seeing also that S. *Paul*, in the same place, *Ephesians* the 4. v. 10. tells us,
that

that the said Pastours are to consummate the Saints, and to build up the mysticall Body of Christ, I demand, whither the Apostle by these words make not those Pastours, able to secure Christian people from error, not only in the foundation (as Protestants term it) but in superstructures also; for otherwise they would have been instituted by our Saviour only to found his mysticall Body the Church, but not to build it up, and to ground, or initiate the Saints, but not to consummate them.

Quest. 22. If it should be answered, that these and such like promises, or institutions of Christ, are only conditionall, that is truly intended on his part, but yet may be frustrated by the malice of such as correspond not to his intention; and therefore, though he intended, that these Pastours should performe the said offices in the Church, yet that it involved this condition, if they were not wanting on
their

their parts, but by their failing the institution of Christ is made frustrate and of no effect.

I answer to this prophane and unchristian objection, first, that if Christs promises and institutions be thus inefficacious and conditionall, that notwithstanding all the promises, that Christ hath made for the preservation of his Church, yet by the malice of Christians, or others, the whole Christian Church may utterly faile and come to nothing; Secondly that it may erre even in fundamentall points (contrarie to the doctrine of Protestants) and so become a Synagogue of Satan. Thirdly, that the ancient promises, of the coming of the Messias, of the redemption of mankind, of the saving of some at the last judgement, &c. have no absolute certainty in them, and so by the malice of men might have been, or may be frustrated. Fourthly, that by this there is no certain credit to be given to any promise.

promise , or institution of God or Christ , in the whole old or new Testament. For a thousand different conditions may be invented , which not being performed, or put, the prediction fails: thus one may say, (upon the like grounds) that as the promises of benefits , or blessings , might be hindered by the malice and demerits of wicked persons , so the Threats and Thundrings of punishments upon sinners , may be hindered by the virtues and good works of Saints: and because we have no rule to know , what proportion of goodness or malice is sufficient to frustrate such predictions , we remain wholly uncertain, whither they shall be absolutely verified , or no, unless therefore this principle be settled, that all divine institutions and predictions , are to be held absolute, and never to be frustrated, whensoever it is not evidently apparent , that they are conditionall, and may be hindered, there can be no certainty , that any institution,

stitution, or prediction in the whole Scripture shall be absolutely fullfilled. Seeing therefore it is not evident, that this institution *Ephesians* the 4. &c. and others of the same nature concerning the Church, are conditionall, they are to be supposed to be absolute, and not to be frustrated by any malice of men whatsoever. Fifthly, no Protestant, who holds the whole visible Church cannot perish, nor all her Pastours prove willfull Seducers, can apply this answer to the Text now cited, viz. *Ephesians* 4. &c. for if it be hindred by the malice of the said Pastours, they must with joint consent maliciously and wittingly teach false doctrine to be the doctrine of Christ, which were to teach fundamentall errors, and to fall off from Christ. If this solution may pass for current, who can be certainly assured, that there is any true Church of Christ, visible or invisible, existent now in the world: for all the promises, concerning
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ing the continuance of it to the worlds end, may be as well said to be as well conditionall & frustrable by the malice of men, as this *Ephesians* the 4. &c. and who knows, that the said malice is not already grown to that height, that it hath deserved, that God should take his true Church quite out of the world; and so that there is now no true Church at all existent in the whole world.

Quest. 23. Whither it be not evident, that unlearned Protestants, who cannot determine differences in religion, either by force of argument, or places of Scripture, but must wholly depend, in the choice of their faith, upon the authority and credit of Christian Teachers, are not obliged in conscience to preferre that authority and credibility of Doctours, before all others, which all circumstances considered, is absolutely and unquestionably the greater authority.

Quest. 24. Whither that authority
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of Doctours, where those of one side are equall at least, if not exceeding them of the contrarie party, in learning, wisdom, zeal, sincerity, vertue, sanctitie, and all other qualities and perfections, which conferre to the accomplishment of compleat authority in a Christian Teacher, and with this equality incomparably exceed the Doctours of the other party in number, is not in all prudence to be judged absolutely & unquestionably the greater authority?

Quest. 25. Whither this equality at least, in all the said perfections, is not to be found in the Roman Doctours, compared with those of Protestants?

Quest 26. Whither with this fore-mentioned equalizing the Protestant Doctours, those of the Roman Church, the many years of their continuance, and universall extent of their religion considered, exceed not incomparably in number those of the Protestant profession? Quest.

Quest. 27. Whither, this equality in perfections & incomparable excess in number considered, all unlearned Protestants are not obliged, both in prudence and conscience, to preferre the authority of the Roman Doctours before that of Protestants, and consequently to follow the Roman, and desert the Protestant doctrine?

Quest. 28. Whither upon the fore-said considerations, the authority of the Protestant Doctours, in all things wherein they contradict the Roman, is not contemptible, and unable to sway the judgement of any prudent Christian, to frame any morall esteem of it: for though in matters, wherein they are either seconded, or not contradicted, by an authority incomparably greater then their own, they may deservedly be esteemed, for their naturall abilities and morall qualities worthy of credit, yet in all things where in they stand in opposition, and contradiction against an authority in-

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comparably exceeding theirs, they deserve nothing but to be slighted & contemned by all those, who are to be led by the sole force of authority. Thus when Protestant Doctours affirm, that either Scriptures or Fathers are for them, and against the Roman Church, what they say in this is not to be regarded, seeing the authoritie of the Roman Doctours, absolutely greater then theirs, unanimously affirms the quite contrary. Thus when they affirm that the Roman Church is full of errours, and superstitions crept in they know neither when nor how, their accusation is to be slighted, being clearly and constantly contradicted by a far greater authority. Thus they say, that Protestants may be saved, living and dying willfully in their religion, they deserve no credit at all, for the quite contrary is most constantly defended by the incomparably stronger authoritie of the Roman Doctours: and the like is to be affirmed

affirmed in all the points of difference betwixt the two Religions. So that a Protestant is not to consider the abilities & authority of his Doctours absolutely, or in matters out of controverſie, but as contradicting an authority incomparably exceeding theirs; in which contradiction they deſerve neither credit nor eſteem.

Queſt. 29. I demand further, that if the authoritie of all the Doctours of the whole body of Proteſtants, be ſo inconfiderable, in compariſon with that of the Roman Doctours, how much leſs will be the authoritie of any one ſect, or party of them; and then how minute and ſcarce perceptible will be the authoritie of a *Lawd*, an *Hammond*, a *Chillingworth*, a *Fern*, a *Bramhall*, a *Taylor*, &c. which now obtain ſo powerfull an Aſcendant, upon the hearts of our modern lay Proteſtants; ſeeing they are in a manner nothing in reſpect of the authoritie of the Roman Doctours.

Quest. 30. All this is demanded, supposing that the Roman Doctours were only equall to those of Protestants in all the forenamed qualities, conducing to the perfect authoritie of a Master in Christianity: But now I demand, whether those, who have authoritie of Teaching in the Roman Church, generally speaking, in so much as can be prudently deduced by experience from them, are not much excelling the Protestant ministrie in all the said qualities?

What Councils have they worth the mentioning in comparison with the generall Councils consenting with the present Roman Church, (even according to their own confession) as the second of Nice, the great Council of Lateran, the Council of Constance, Florence & Trent, wherein such multitudes of learned men, & Holy Patriarchs, Metropolitans, Archbishops, Bishops, Doctours, Prelates, both of the Eastern and Western

stern Churches, unanimously confirmed the Romane, and condemned the Protestant doctrine :

What proofs of learning have the Protestant ministry, comparable to those of the Roman Doctors, whereof many have written *one*, no small number *two*, others *three* and *four*, others *six*, *eight*, *ten*, *twelve*, and some *twenty & four* and *twenty* great Tomes in *Folio*, and those replenished in the generall repute of Christendom, even amongst Protestants also, with profound and high learning ?

Who amongst their ministrie have they, who have obtained the universall esteem of sanctitie, as hath our *Gregorie*, *Beda*, *Thomas*, *Bonaventure*, *Antonine*, *Dominicke*, and diverse others.

Where find they amongst theirs that zeal, to pass into the heart of so many barbarous and heathen Nations to plant the Gospell, even with the undergoing of unheard-of torments,

and suffering most cruell Martyrdoms, as many of the Roman Clergie have done within these late years? let them name but one sole Minister, who hath suffered Martyrdom for preaching Christian faith to the Pagans.

What means have the Protestant Ministry, with their wives, goods and families, to apply themselves to study and devotion, comparable to our single Clergie, and retired religious.

Where is that unanimous consent in all points of faith (seeing they are perpetually jarring, not onely one with another, but the same Ministers dissenting notoriously now, from what they taught twenty years ago) amongst them, compared to the constancy and agreement of our Doctors?

What Miracles have any of their Ministry ever done, in confirmation, either of their doctrine against the Roman Church, or of the Christian faith against heathers, as (unless all hu-
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mane faith be infringed) many of ours have done, both against them and heathens?

I could instance in many more particulars, but these may suffice for these short demands. Whence appears evidently, that whosoever professes to be led by the sole authority of Christian Doctours, and Pastours, must either deserve the esteem, I say not only of an unchristian, but even of an imprudent man, if he adhere to so undeserving and contemptible an authority, as is that of the Protestant Ministry in comparison of the Roman Doctours, who so incomparably outstrip them, not only in multitude, but in all the motives and perfections, which give credit to the authority of a Christian Teacher.

Quest. 31. Whether hence be not evidently discovered, not only the insufferable pride of *Luther*, and the other originall beginners of any Sect in Protestancy, in preferring their sole

authority before that of the Prelates and Doctours of all the visible Churches in Christendom, existent when they begun first to preach their doctrine, but the extream madnesse of all the ignorant laity, who followed them, upon their sole authority, and preferred one single person upon his bare word, (without any extraordinary signes or manifest proofs from heaven attesting his authority) before all the Doctours, Prelates, Councells, Churches within the precincts of Christendom, both of that present time and for nine hundred years before? and if those were infested with so deep a frenesie, how can any man be judged deservedly discreet and prudent, who approves of their proceedings in this particular, and sides with them, (at least in some article or other) in the opposition of the whole Christian world, as all Protestants do, even to this day.

Quest. 32. Hence I farther demand,
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that seeing on one side the true Christian religion, having the divine wisdom for its authour, cannot admit of any thing imprudent, as properly belonging to it, in the choice of it: and on the other, that the Protestant religion, or any sect whatsoever sprung from it, or existent in it, cannot be prudently chosen, by any unlearned person, who is sufficiently informed of the nullity of that authority which propounds it, compared with the authority propounding the Roman religion; whether I say, those particulars considered, the Protestant religion, in any sect of it whatsoever, can be esteemed the true Christian religion?

Quest. 33. Hence, I presse farther, whether the proving that Protestant religion cannot be prudently chosen, or retayned, by any unlearned persons, who are sufficiently informed, of the eminent authority propounding the Roman religion, is not a sufficient argument to them, that no
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sect amongst them in any point where in it differs from the Roman, hath either any solid ground in the holy Scriptures, or true relation to Gods holy Spirit, or coherence with true reason; seeing a religion, which cannot by them be chosen prudently, cannot possibly proceed from any of these three; whatsoever fair show Protestants, each respectively to his severall sect, make vainly of them.

Quest. 34. And upon this, I demand yet farther, whether the Roman Doctors have any obligation to urge any other argument then this, either from Scripture, Fathers, or reason against Protestants, till they have cleared their religion from the impeachment of imprudence, committed by their followers in the election of it, or persisting in it, as is a fore declared.

Quest. 35. On the contrary side; I demand whether the Roman Doctors have any obligation in rigour
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of dispute, to use any other argument, for perswading unlearned persons, to desert the Protestant, and imbrace the Roman religion, then this of imprudence in adhering to the Protestant, and of prudence in uniting themselves to the Roman Church, so long as the said unlearned Protestants, perswade themselves, that they proceed prudently in preferring their own before the Roman. Seeing this erroneous perswasion is the first step which must be redressed relinquishing the one; and the contrary perswasion, the first step which must be fixed, in approaching to the other. Now when unlearned Protestants once confess that they are convinced in this, and thereupon recede from Protestancy, but object that the prudentiall motives to preferre the Roman religion before the Protestant, as they convince that the Protestant is wholly improbable, and so to be deserted, so they convince no more then that the Roman is probable,

ble, and so is in great likelyhood to be the true religion, but convince not, that it is so much as morally certain? to Protestants brought thus far, there is an obligation put upon Roman Doctours, to prove at least the morall certainty of it; to such as acknowledge that it is morally certain that the Roman religion, is the sole true saving religion, but deny, notwithstanding, that it thereby follows that it is fallibly certain; rises an obligation to prove, that it is also infallibly certain, and when one is once convinced of this also, but yet doubts whether this infallibility be divine, and so the highest of all infallibilities, there will be also an obligation to shew to such as are brought on so far, the most high divine infallibility of the Roman religion. Hence therefore I demand, whether our late Protestants, and Socinians, proceed not preposterously, and unreasonably, in pressing Roman Doctours, to demonstrate the divine in-

infallibility of the truth of the Roman religion, before they themselves grant, that it is either infallible in any degree, or morally certain, or probable, or prudentiall. For though it be necessary, to prove all these particulars in their due circumstances, yet there is no necessity, to prove them all at once to every adversary, but by degrees the one in order after the other, with correspondence, to what of them is denied, or called in question, by those with whom we treat, for thus we proceed orderly, and logically *à notioribus, ad ignotiora*, and hold a correspondence with nature, by proceeding, *ab imperfectionibus, ad perfectiora*, still observing the stop, or progreffe of our adversary, and still stopping, and going forward along with him. And if this methode had been strictly held by our late controversists, the adversaries mouths had been stopped long before this.

Quest. 36. Seeing these demands are
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Quest. 36. Seeing these demands are
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proposed to such as believe that without true Christian faith no man can be saved, and that this saving faith is one only; and that this only faith is infallible, & divine: and moreover seeing it is already shewed that every difference, in any point of faith whatsoever, makes a different faith and religion; and that amongst all the different religions, & beliefs, now on foot in these parts of Christendom, there is none that can be prudently imbraced, (by such as are in the number of the unlearned, and yet are sufficiently informed about the force of the authority of those who teach them) save the Roman, and that no religion can be true, which cannot be prudently imbraced by such unlearned persons, seeing in a manner the whole multitude of Christians consists of those who are unlearned, and must according to prudence, follow the authority or their Teachers. Those things, I say considered, it is finally demanded, whe-

whether by proving, that the Roman
faith only can be prudently imbraced
(which is already done) it is not made
inevitably clear, that the Roman on-
ly, is that Divine, Infallible, One,
true Faith, wherein Christians may
be saved.

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